Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A process the for the preparation of a compound comprising at least two disulphide bonds from a precursor having at least two pairs of thiol groups, each pair of thiol groups being protected with different thiol-protecting groups, said process comprising:

(i) reaction of the precursor ~~deprotection of an acetamidomethyl- (Acm), 4-methylbenzyl- (MBzl) and/or t-butyl- (tBu) protected thiol in the absence of a silyl chloride which comprises reacting said protected thiol~~ with an acid in the presence of an oxidising agent at a first temperature sufficient to effect deprotection and ~~generation of~~ disulphide bond~~s~~ formation for a first pair of protected thiol groups;

(ii) raising the temperature of the reaction mixture from step (i) to a second temperature sufficient to effect deprotection and disulphide bond formation for a second pair of protected thiol groups.

2. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein said acid is trifluoroacetic acid (TFA).

3. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim1 wherein said oxidising agent is dimethyl sulphoxide (DMSO).

4. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein deprotection is effected using a TFA/DMSO mixture comprising 1 to 20% DMSO.

5. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein said protected thiol is present in a peptide.

6. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim 5 wherein said peptide comprises at least two tBu protected thiols and/or at least two Acm or MBzl protected thiols.

7. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein tBu protected thiols are deprotected at room temperature in step (i).

8. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein Acm or MBzl protected thiols are deprotected at temperatures of 30-50°C, in step (ii).

9. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 8 wherein Acm or MBzl protected thiols are deprotected at temperatures of 50-70°C, in step (ii).